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NEW BEGINNINGS

To Provide Accurate and Timely Information

Governor's May Revision

The Communications Team has heard from a number of people wanting to know about the recently released Governor's May Revision to the budget. In the Governor's May Revise he has proposed allocating funds to the Bay Area Project. The questions have come in conjunction with the rumor that we are closing earlier than proposed or right on schedule slated for June 2005.

What is evident from the May Revise is the fact that the Governor supports the direction that the Department of Developmental Services has taken in their effort to develop a plan that is comprehensive and speaks to the needs of each individual at Agnews Developmental Center. Planning requires resources, both in funding and in man

hours.

Presently, the Regional Centers, Agnews and DDS have allocated resources from existing budgets to begin this process. The Governor has indicated by his proposed allocation that this project is important enough not to be derailed by a lack of funding. The Bay Area Project will, if the May Revise is approved, have the ability to retain the services of consultants and other needed resources independent of budgetary constraints of the partner agencies. We want to be sure that we have a plan that addresses all aspects of the lives of those who live at Agnews. The proposed allocation helps make that possible.

This is a significant step in the facilitation of the planning process.

However, we must not lose sight of the hours, days and months that it will take to complete the plan. We will be listening to people from all walks of life including parents and family members of our clients as well as experts in the fields of Housing, Support Services, Quality Assurance and Service Hubs. Whether we close or stay open, the plan will be a tremendous resource in developing substantive services for People With Developmental Disabilities.

Futures Planning Team

Angela Vrbanc-Libby, Chair
Ext. 6401

The Futures Planning Team has been meeting regularly and is monitoring the status of the documents being submitted from the programs with regard to both the “needs” and “preferences” of individuals, their families, and others. At this time, about 100 of the “needs” reports have been submitted, and 50 of those have been entered into the database. Additionally, 78 individuals have participated in the process for identifying preferences regarding their future plan. All of this information will be supplied to the Community Development Team.

Follow-up training with those coordinating this process, Regional Center liaisons, Individual Plan Coordinators, Residence Managers, Social Workers and Program Management occurred this past Monday, May 19th. This was an opportunity to review progress, clarify issues, and brainstorm some strategies for dealing with unique situations.

This Futures Planning process will continue over the next several months, and by the end of October, it is anticipated, all the preliminary data will be captured and compiled. Tasks that may be focused on at that time, if necessary, will be developing a transfer trauma plan, monitoring the transition process, and further education of clients and families regarding futures planning resources.

Staff Support Team

Rozsa Romvari, Chair
Ext. 6132

The Staff Support Team has now grown to a 36 member group. We meet every other Thursday. At this time we are still focusing on team building and fundraising for future events. We have held two BBQ sales. The T-shirts, celebrating our 115 years of service to the community are available for \$10 at the Fiscal Office. Buy one and wear it on Fridays!

The Team met with two representatives from the Department of Employment Development to inquire about services they provide to employees. We received useful information and we'll invite them in the future to conduct a workshop for ADC employees. We are working with CalPers to develop a list of non-State employers with PERS to broaden employment opportunities. We'll be making contact with them to be placed on their job vacancy announcement distribution list.

We are still in the process of developing a wide range of ideas and activities. For example we are planning our first promotional exam training.

We welcome your ideas – please send them to Rozsa Romvari, Team Leader.

Communications Team

John Folck, Chair
Ext. 6501

The Communications Team has as one of its work plan outcomes, the establishment of a team within the Communications group, whose charge it will be to speak knowledgeably about the Bay Area Project and the planning process we have undertaken. As the team chairperson, I had the opportunity recently to attend a Community Forum at St. Lucy's Parish Activity Center. At that meeting of about 40 people, I found that many people in our surrounding community are interested and concerned about the possible closure of Agnews Developmental Center. The forum was an excellent opportunity to talk about Agnews, its clients and staff and, the quality services that we provide. In addition, I was able to talk about the plan and the fact that it is in the formative stages, neither complete nor accepted. Finally, I stressed the fact that whether accepted or not, the plan has given us the opportunity to begin looking at all services that are available to People with Developmental Disabilities and, to begin developing service models that will benefit all. We will keep you posted as we have opportunities to spread the word about the Bay Area Project.

The Business Management Team continues to make progress regarding our task plans. The committee membership participation remains stronger than ever. Current activities includes; identifying the rules and regulations that pertain to specific assignments, reviewing current policy or procedures and recommending modifications where needed, developing systems to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations as well as ensuring accountability, developing audit tools, and identifying guidelines for storage, distribution, and what to do with what is no longer needed.

Special thanks to all that assisted during the recent move of Residence 579 to 560. Your efforts provided a smooth transition for everyone involved in that residence.

**Business
Management
Team**
Karen Clark, Chair
Ext. 6135

Check out the official state website!

This newsletter and other interesting information is at

www.dds.ca.gov

Housing Development Workgroup The teams planning for the possible transition of Agnew's consumers to the community would like to offer more information to consumers, families, and staff regarding what services currently exists. These teams need your input to better understand what questions need to be answered regarding community services. If you have any ideas or suggestions for educational forums, please call, email, or write to Julie Rienhardt at (831) 419-5511, julie@imaginesls.org or 2-1500 East Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Support Services Workgroup is made up of around 20 members so far. The group has representatives who are from the three different regional centers, two different area boards, Protection and Advocacy, the Regional Project, service providers, parents, and consumers. We meet every other week to identify and discuss available service options and services that need to be developed which could meet the needs of Agnews residents in the community.

The type of supports we discuss include day programs (like job and school), recreational and social activities, residential supports, and any other support that might be needed. We welcome new members at any time, and encourage any ideas and suggestions. If you are interested in becoming a member of the group, please contact Patricia Flannery 408-451-6317 or email pflanner@agnews.dds.ca.gov . If you would like to pass on comments or suggestions, you may contact Patricia or Mike Keeley 408-341-3522 or email samikek@sarc.org . Our next meeting dates are all on Wednesdays: 6/11, 6/25, 7/9 and 7/23 from 10 am to 2 pm on Residence 70 in Building 52 at Agnews.

**Community
Development
Team**
Santi Rogers
SARC

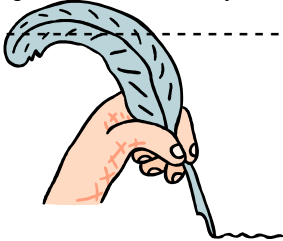


*History never looks like
history when you are
living through it.*

Rumor Control

Recently, a rumor came across my desk regarding the Governors budget for fiscal year 2003/2004. Rumor has it that the decision to close Agnews will be made in that budget. At our first Town Hall meeting, when Harold Pitchford our Executive Director announced the Governors intent to ask for a plan for closure, he also discussed the time lines associated with the development of a plan for closure. The budget to be considered for signature this month will have in it a request that the Department of Developmental Services develop a plan for a potential closure of Agnews. The plan is to be presented to the Legislature by April of 2004. Should the plan be accepted and the Governor agrees, the Governor will include in his budget for fiscal year 2004/2005 a recommendation that Agnews be closed. A decision to go forward with the closure plan will not be official until the Governor signs the budget for fiscal year 2004/2005, a little over a year from now. At this time, we have no way of discerning the content of the plan as the various work teams are developing the components of a workable plan as we speak. The Bay Area Project has great latitude in recommending the types of services and supports necessary for our individuals to transition smoothly into community settings. They will also recommend time frames for implementation including what can be realized within the schedule set by the Governors proposal.

Another rumor indicates that employees of Agnews Developmental Center will be losing the Recruitment and Retention bonus (R & R) because of this years budget shortfall. This will cause a significant loss in staff. In response, there will be many proposals on the bargaining table as the Governor goes about the task of balancing the budget. What is proposed now may be nothing like what is the final outcome at the time the budget is signed. We will be hearing many rumors about budget cuts and employee reductions over the next month or so. Keep informed as the budget progresses towards signature and you will see compromise on both sides as the legislators attempt to provide a budget that is right for California. Should we lose the R & R funding, the Communications Team can say without doubt that we have a large number of dedicated staff at Agnews. For these people, any decision about leaving centers around more than just the loss of R & R. For many of us who never seem to make enough to cover all the expenses of our frenetic lives, the loss of income is very difficult. But a decision to leave is made taking into account more than just income. We like working here and we have established our homes and friends in the area. Our kids attend good schools and we have infinite leisure opportunities at our finger tips. To leave or not is a decision that is not made lightly but a decision that is made with the greatest of difficulty. Those are the staff who will insure the continuation of the quality services we provide at this facility.



YOUR COMMENTS:

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Please submit to: Mailroom Box #156
Phone 408-451-6501

AGNEWS
DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

Name _____ I wish to remain anonymous _____ Date _____

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